Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 06, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm by Walcott. A quorum of commissioners in attendance included Walcott, Hammer, Roelke, and Famularo. Staff liaison Bennett was present.

Notice of Open Meeting

Approval of Agenda

Hammer motioned to approve the agenda as presented; seconded by Famularo. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Approval of Minutes

1. Consider and take action to approve the Tourism Commission meeting minutes from April 6, 2026

   Famularo motioned to approve as presented, the Tourism Commission meeting minutes from April 6, 2026; seconded by Roelke. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Public Comment

There were no members of the public in attendance for comment. Staff did not receive any correspondence.

New Business

2. Consider and take action regarding 2027 Tourism budget

   Bennett outlined a few topics to consider for the 2027 budget and highlighted current print marketing that could be retooled towards other marketing or projects. Walcott noted that there should be emphasis on digital optimization for searching for Columbus area events.

   Additional discussion led to the possibility of utilizing current tools and promoting the events calendar as part of digital and print marketing efforts and leveraging the larger events in distribution of event calendar marketing materials. The Commission would like to reconsider print / digital marketing from The Greater Valley Guide and the Dodge and Columbia County Guides as they currently cost a little over $3,000 combined and have generated at best a 2% click rate.

   Bennett noted the City is looking to contribute at a consistent level to the 4th of July Celebration. The City has contributed some money in 2026 but would like to create a dedicated line item for the contribution. The Commission discussed the possibility of housing the line item within the Tourism budget as it makes sense, but would like to have creative outlets to promote the community events calendar at the 4th of July festivities and its marketing materials. Ideas were floated to include a QR code to the calendar in the 4th of July Organization's annual ad book, parade handouts, and swag / merchandise materials.

   Bennett stated that the City is undergoing another transition to a new accounting software product and there may be changes to current line items.

No action was taken.

3. Consider and take action regarding payment for City light pole banners

   Bennett noted an accounting error and its resolution to the Commission. The error included $2,220 for the purchase of the new light pole banners that are currently downtown. Staff was asked if the Tourism Commission would be interested in helping to pay for the banners. The Commission discussed that the banners could be a Tourism item in the future but declined to purchase the 2026 banners. There was additional discussion about diversifying the banners, in particular, partnering with the School District for designs.

   No action was taken to cover the cost of the purchased banners.

4. Nomination and election for the officer positions of Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary

   Due to having only four members on the Tourism Commission, there was discussion as to whether to postpone the officer election and if Mayor Hammer or Alder Roelke can be officers. It was noted they can be, and that officer elections take place during the first Tourism meeting after the Council appointments in May. Hammer stated that he is trying to fill the two vacancies on the Tourism Commission. There was a question regarding the Secretary's role on the commission. Bennett stated that it's a figurehead position as due to State Statute, the Tourism Commission has a roster of six members, the Secretary doesn't do much. If the membership was seven or more, the Secretary would run the meeting in the event of the Chair and Vice Chair not being in attendance.

   Hammer motioned to nominate Walcott as Chair, Famularo as Vice Chair, and Roelke as Secretary of the Tourism Commission; seconded by Roelke. There was no additional discussion. The nominations were made by unanimous vote. Hammer motioned to vote for Walcott as Chair, Famularo as Vice Chair, and Roelke as Secretary; seconded by Roelke. There was no additional discussion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Adjourn

Famularo motioned to adjourn the meeting; Roelke seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:21pm.

*A quorum of city committees and/or commissions may be present at this meeting. No action will be taken or considered by those committees and/or commissions.

** These minutes will be approved at a future meeting and may be amended. These minutes are respectfully submitted by David Bennett, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator **